BENGALURU, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2025 www.Bangaloremirror.com 12 Pages PRICE ₹3

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 27 | Min 21 | Humidity 66% Partly Cloudy Sensex 80,426 | Nifty 24,654 | Gold 1,13,766 | Silver 1,42,147 | Dollar 88.69 | Euro 103.68 | GBP 119.35

PICK & CHOOSE

Civic activist conducts open poll to find out whether citizens prefer Metro Phase 3A or the proposed Twin Tunnel Road — nearly 97% picked the train

PAGE 6

FORCE BE WITH YOU

Rani Chennamma Force to start operation daily between 9 am and 9 pm, to keep close watch on public areas, increase security for women

PAGE 7

As incidents of delivery agents being attacked while at work during odd hours or on isolated streets recur, absence of redressal mechanisms leave them completely vulnerable

THE GIG HEAT

Caught in between aggressive customers and unresponsive platform companies

Sanjana CS
c-sanjana.s@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

KAUSHIK J

Bengaluru's gig economy workforce, cab drivers, food delivery executives, and other service providers are facing increasing risks on city roads as reports of late-night assaults by intoxicated individuals begin to surface. Over the past few weeks, incidents have been reported in various parts of the city where drivers and delivery agents were verbally abused, physically attacked, or harassed by groups of individuals under the influence of intoxication. Many of these cases go unreported, gig workers say, because they fear further trouble or believe police intervention may not bring quick relief.

On the night of September 24, some delivery workers were attacked near the VV Puram store by bike-borne miscreants. The attackers, believed to be minors under the influence of alcohol and drugs, carried a machete and targeted the workers "just for fun". Luckily, no one was seriously hurt. After the workers alerted the police, a case was filed and the culprits were caught with the help of CCTV footage.

"Once, someone placed an order from a restaurant, but later I found out it wasn't a real order. They just grabbed the food from me and ran away. Near the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

"Without proper protection or redressal mechanisms, many workers remain silent out of fear. Yet, they continue to work because they have no other option. Families depend on them, and they need to earn their livelihood

—Delivery agent

Green flag

Ward and street level citizen panels to make sure Bengaluru's trees are well looked after

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

While the Greater Bengaluru Authority's (GBA) much-awaited tree census continues to drag endlessly, Bengalureans are gearing up to take matters into their own hands.

A group of citizens and tree activists has come together to create ward-level and street-level Citizen Tree Committees to protect the city's green cover.

"Bengaluru is losing its green cover fast, and the city's avenue trees are ailing. It is crucial for Bengaluru to keep its trees intact to keep enjoying the good climate. We plan to make Citizen Tree Committees in all the wards to make an impact on the city's environment. Many government agencies and committees have failed in protecting the trees in the city, leading to a visible negative impact," said Vinod Jacob, a city-based environmentalist and urban strategist.

Under the initiative, citizens across the city will be encouraged to adopt one avenue tree per household or trees on a street as a community.

"We have decided to form such committees as we feel that citizens' participation in maintaining the city's green cover is vital. We need citizens who can manage trees in their areas or in front of their homes. Environmental issues in the city are out of control, as the forest department does

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

THINGS TO DO

01 Study abroad

Education in Ireland is set to host its flagship 'Education in Ireland Fair', bringing together representatives and academics from 21 Irish universities and colleges, along with officials from the Irish Visa Office, offering students and parents the opportunity to engage directly with institutions and gain first-hand insights on studying in Ireland. **Where: Taj MG Road; When: October 5, 12 pm to 4 pm**

02 Tradition in transit

As part of its continued effort to showcase Karnataka's rich heritage and bring cultural experiences closer to travellers and the community, Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru is hosting a week-long Nadahabba Dasara celebration, showcasing the state's folk, classical, and traditional art forms. **Where: Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru – T1 Kerbside, T1 Arrivals Kerbside & T2 Arrivals Forecourt; When: September 22 to 29**

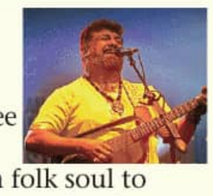
03 Festive mode on

Bhartiya Mall of Bengaluru is organising 'Dandiya Nights', a spellbinding experience where the infectious beats of Bollywood meet the timeless rhythm of dandiya, creating an evening filled with music, dance, and merriment. **Where: Bhartiya Mall of Bengaluru, Thanisandra Main Road; When: September 30 and October 1, 6 pm**

04 Celebrating artistry

Rajasthan Handicrafts Furniture is holding 'Silk - Cotton Jewellery Expo' bringing together rural artisans from the eastern part of India, featuring vast collections of cotton and silk handlooms and handicrafts, dress materials, sarees, and more. **Where: Siddhartha Convention Center/ Kalyana Mantapa, HSR Layout; When: September 13 to 29**

05 Amp it up



Raghu Dixit will be taking the stage for a spectacular Silver Jubilee celebration of timeless tunes and unforgettable performances. From folk soul to rock fusion, the performance is set to take the audience on a melodious journey. **Where: Phoenix Marketcity, Whitefield; When: October 11, 7 pm**

AI to set question papers for VTU exams

University to use AI to set papers and evaluate them; implementation to be in phases to ensure smoother adoption, with plans to introduce system first for course involving fewer students

Sridhar Vivan
sridhar.vivan
@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @sridharvMirror

In a first-of-its-kind move, Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) is set to harness artificial intelligence (AI) to prepare question papers for engineering examinations. The university, which has already pioneered digital evaluation in the state, is now taking the next big step by introducing AI in both paper-setting and assessment processes.

Traditionally, question papers depended on subject experts, but VTU believes AI can streamline the process and avoid repetitive questions from previous years. Several private universities in Karnataka have already experimented with AI for paper setting, and VTU's trials have convinced officials of its effectiveness.

Replacing human judgment entirely with AI remains challenging, especially since engineering exams require detailed answers rather than multiple-choice responses

How will AI work?

The system is straightforward: AI is fed with soft copies of textbooks and the curriculum. Using prompts such as the number of questions required, weightage of marks, and difficulty levels, the AI then generates unique question sets. During recent demonstrations by three to four companies, officials saw how efficiently AI produced fresh questions while eliminating repetition from past papers, according to officials. Beyond paper setting, AI could also support evaluation. By reading and analysing scripts, it can allocate marks based on structured responses. However, given the nature of engineering exams—where descriptive answers dominate—the technology's reliability for evaluation is still under discussion.

Pilot with MBA exams

Since VTU oversees 250 engineering colleges with nearly 3 lakh students, a complete rollout is not feasible immediately. Instead, the university plans to introduce AI first for MBA examinations, which involve fewer students. If successful, the technology will gradually expand to engineering courses. "AI is making significant progress across sectors, and we too must keep pace with technology. We have decided to use AI in question paper setting, while evaluation through AI will be tested in supplementary exams before broader adoption," said VTU Vice-Chancellor S Vidyashankar.

Challenges in evaluation

Currently, VTU follows a double-evaluation system where two evaluators mark each paper. Even then, variations in scores often arise. Replacing human judgment entirely with AI remains challenging, especially since engineering exams require detailed answers rather than multiple-choice responses typical of competitive tests. Notably, Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS) had also considered AI for examinations earlier, but technical issues forced it to shelve the plan. VTU, however, is confident that phased implementation will ensure smoother adoption.

Two youth drown as boat capsizes

In a tragic incident on Sunday afternoon, two young men drowned after their boat capsized in Hesaraghatta Lake, located under the jurisdiction of Soladevanahalli Police Station.

The deceased have been identified as Ananth (27), a mobile tower technician from Hesaraghatta village and Anand (35), an iron binding worker from the same village.

The incident occurred around 12 noon on Sunday. Due to the weekend holiday, several amateur fishermen had gathered at the vast Hesaraghatta Lake, fishing from small boats near the edges of the water body.

Ananth and Anand too had ventured into the lake to fish and spend leisure time. They paddled into the middle of the lake in a small boat. Unfortunately, the boat capsized for unknown reasons. In an attempt to save one another, both men drowned.

Fishermen nearby heard their cries for help but were unable to reach them in time. Alarmed, they quickly alerted the villagers. Soladevanahalli police and fire and emergency services rushed to the spot and launched a search operation that continued until 7 pm. As the bodies could not be recovered, expert divers have been called in from Mangaluru to assist in the search. A case has been registered. The families of the deceased have stated that both men knew how to swim. **— BMB**

Vaccination drive boosts rabies awareness

In a step towards a rabies-free Bengaluru, a free vaccination drive held at Cubbon Dog Park on Sunday successfully vaccinated many pet and stray dogs. The event, marked by a collaborative spirit, saw pet parents express great appreciation for the convenient facility, blending essential animal healthcare with community engagement.

The drive was organised by the CJ Memorial Trust, in association with FIAPO & Cubbon Park Canines, in partnership with the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services (AHVS), Bengaluru Urban District. The AHVS team, headed by Dr Ravi, Assistant Director of Bengaluru North Taluk, with a 4-member vet team was on-site to administer vaccines and educate attendees on the importance of vaccination and proper management to control rabies.

Adding academic heft to the initiative, Dr Isloor's team highlighted how rabies is entirely preventable and outlined India's commitment to achieving zero human deaths from rabies by 2030. They detailed the path-breaking work of the rabies lab at the Bangalore Veterinary University, particularly their focus on faster, cheaper diagnostics, and developing an oral rabies vaccine.

Priya Chetty-Rajagopal, Trustee of CJMT, spoke about various initiatives to combat rabies, including the Blr BBMP CARE rabies helpline for quicker municipal response. She stressed a key announcement: the launch of an online petition (www.change.org/OralRabies-Vaccine) advocating for the development and official launch of oral rabies vaccination in India. "It has been successful internationally, and with Bengaluru already pioneering research—potentially two years from launch—an urgent push by authorities could expand coverage dramatically and potentially reduce rabies deaths by 50 per cent," she said. **— BMB**

PMEGP loan demand high in B'luru, but rejections mount

The Entrepreneurs in the city are increasingly turning to the Pradhan Mantri Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) for support, but a majority are being turned away. Bengaluru, which filed 914 applications under the scheme in 2024–25, ranks among the top five districts in demand. Yet, like the rest of Karnataka, rejection rates remain high, with banks approving only a fraction of proposals.

Statewide, of the 20,578 applications submitted, just 6,834 were sanctioned, while over 11,900 were rejected and nearly 3,000 remain pending. Officials admit that incomplete business plans and poor documentation continue to stall approvals, leaving many urban and rural entrepreneurs — including those in Bengaluru — struggling to secure subsidy-linked loans meant to boost employment and small-scale ventures. **— BMB**

Temporary detention centre for illegal foreigners at 'Home of Hope'

The Karnataka government, in coordination with Bengaluru police and the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), is setting up a new temporary detention centre for illegal foreigners at Home of Hope in Doddagubbi, run by activist Auto Raja. With existing centres accommodating only 50 inmates each, authorities faced challenges housing over 400 illegal residents among the city's 10,650 foreigners. The new facility, expected to be operational soon, will provide secure accommodation until deportation, with the police overseeing food, security, and coordination.

In recent years, 304 foreigners — mainly from Nigeria, South Africa and other nations — have been deported, while 66 house owners have been booked for illegally sheltering foreigners without notifying authorities.

Police have intensified operations, directing educational institutions, hospitals and NGOs to share details of foreigners under their purview. The third detention centre is expected to ease the strain on enforcement agencies and ensure swifter action against those staying illegally in the state. **— BMB**

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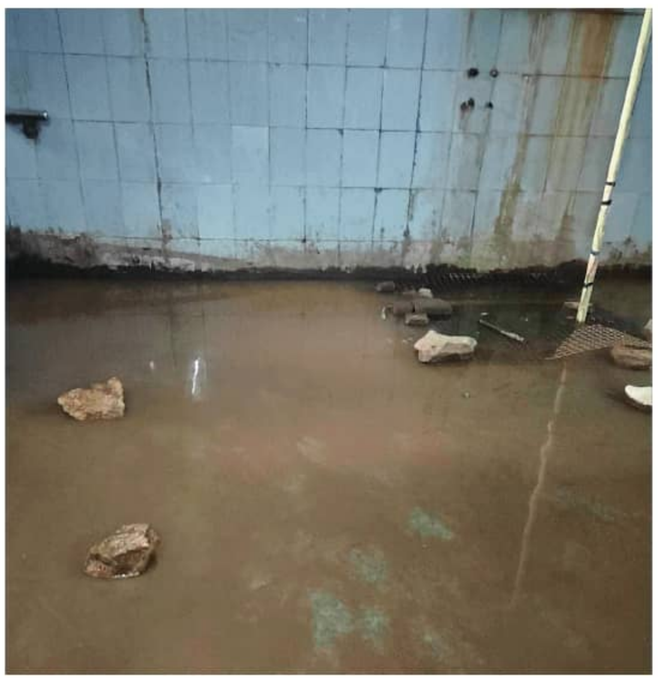
Residents' perseverance restores Kudlu Gate subway

Citizen-led efforts at Kudlu Gate Subway showcase collaboration with NHAI, proving public participation can transform neglected spaces into safe, usable infrastructure

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR



Pedestrians recall risking lives earlier, but today celebrate a revived subway that reflects dedication, awareness drives, and responsible public participation

From neglect to revival, Kudlu Gate Subway's makeover reflects community spirit and authority cooperation, setting an example for sustainable upkeep of public spaces across Bengaluru's vital Hosur Road corridor

Restoration of Kudlu Gate Subway has the potential to become a case study for residents, volunteers, and authorities on how to reclaim public places. General trend is public blaming authorities for negligence and apathy without realising the importance of coordination, follow up, and participation in reclamation of public places. The determined willpower, perseverance, and dedication of residents around Kudlu Gate have not only helped restore the subway but also compelled the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to focus on other subways between Silk Board Junction and Electronic City. For years, pedestrians risked their lives crossing the busy Hosur Road, avoiding the Kudlu Gate Subway which had become unusable due to neglect, filth, and poor maintenance.

Many recall how unhygienic conditions forced them to stay away. "I avoided using it for years," said Lalithamba B.V., a civic volunteer. "When one of the residents raised the question of how to make the subway better, the demand for restoration gained momentum in August. I am very happy NHAI took measures to restore it. We have even created a WhatsApp group—Hosur Road Subway—to ensure all the subways remain neat and clean." The journey has been a long one. Bangalore Mirror had reported on December 4, 2022, in a story titled Subway in Major Disarray, demanding authorities maintain the underpass. It took more than two and a half years for officials to respond meaningfully. For many residents, the change is both overdue and inspiring.

Sandeep Kumar Singh, a resident, described his joy at being part of the effort. "The transformation of the Hosur Road subways in recent weeks is remarkable. It shows the power of collaboration between citizens and authorities. As a next step, we are organising an awareness event at the subway, where residents will hold placards and engage with commuters to encourage everyone to keep these spaces clean, safe, and welcoming." Residents also emphasised the challenges they faced. Sheeba Rani, another volunteer, said the work was neither easy nor one-time. "The subway was in a terrible condition. Volunteers, with NHAI's support, cleaned not just the subway but also its surroundings. Exhaust fans have been repaired, and the space feels usable again. But keeping it that way is difficult. People continue to litter, so we are constantly working to maintain it."

The transformation is also being viewed as a model for scaling up. NHAI Project Director Archana Kumar confirmed that Kudlu Gate Subway was taken up as a pilot project. "With its success, we have decided to extend this initiative to all subways between Silk Board and Electronic City. Restoration and beautification are already in progress, and we expect all of them to be ready by the end of the year."

For residents, the Kudlu Gate revival demonstrates how persistence and cooperation can overcome years of neglect. What began as a single query in a neighbourhood group has evolved into a movement that not only reclaimed a neglected subway but also set the tone for reclaiming public spaces citywide.

Campaign demands strict gutka ban, targets health and environmental hazards

Iffath Fathima
iffath.fathima@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Environment-friendly organisations have launched a campaign today demanding stricter enforcement of the gutka ban. The initiative aims to curb health hazards of chewing gutka and pan masala, as well as the environmental menace caused by non-recoverable sachets littered across the city. The campaign kicked off at Silk Board with a special focus on the hashtag #EnforceTheGutkaBan.

The launch featured on-ground activities such as plogging drives and awareness campaigns. Volunteers stressed that spitting not only harms individuals but also dirties public spaces. To amplify the message, organisers introduced an imaginary character, Mr Guttu—a reckless gutka chewer—with the slogan: "Don't be a Guttu, keep your neighbourhood clean."

During the gutka-focused plogging activity at Silk Board Junction, volunteers collected bags full of discarded gutka packets with other litter. The event was organised in collaboration with Greater Bengaluru Authority, Solid Waste Management Round Table (SWMRT), The Indian Ploggers Army, HSR Citizen Forum, Beautiful Bharat, and Stonesoup. "While other waste such as cigarette butts and liquor bottles was also picked up, the spotlight remained on gutka and pan masala sachets, described as part of a 'deadly threesome combo' alongside cigarettes and alcohol," said Raj from the Indian Ploggers Army. "We will continue to work with authorities and scale up efforts to enforce the gutka ban effectively."

BOMMANAHALLI ON THE PATH OF DEVELOPMENT
On 10-08-2025 METRO YELLOW LINE inauguration
Heartly welcome to
Our Beloved
Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modiji

Groups like SWMRT, Beautiful Bharat, and Ploggers Army stressed the need for strict enforcement to curb tobacco-related litter and spitting

Aishwarya Nair of SWMRT said the audit at Silk Board revealed an alarming spread of banned products at one of the city's busiest junctions. "This initiative marks the beginning of the Enforce Gutka Ban campaign, calling on authorities to tighten enforcement, hold violators accountable, and protect citizens and the environment from the harmful effects of gutka. Today's effort is not just about cleaning our streets—it is about demanding action for a cleaner, healthier Bengaluru."

Odette Katrak, environment campaigner and co-founder of Beautiful Bharat, highlighted the broader impact of public spitting. She recalled launching the StopIndiaSpitting movement in 2020 during the Covid pandemic, initially to address disease spread. "Since then, the focus has widened to the dignity of cleaners, respect for community spaces, and pride in the nation," she said. Katrak warned that gutka packets contribute to non-recoverable litter, adding to soil pollution and microplastic contamination. "At Silk Board, we were pulling up bits of pan masala packaging lodged deep in the soil. These not only deface public spaces but also pose long-term risks to soil and water tables."

Organisers said the campaign will now expand citywide with similar clean-ups and awareness drives, urging strict enforcement of the ban.

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Abandoned vehicle

BTM Layout

An abandoned car has blocked a key turn at 9th Cross, 29th Main, for over six months, creating major traffic hazards.

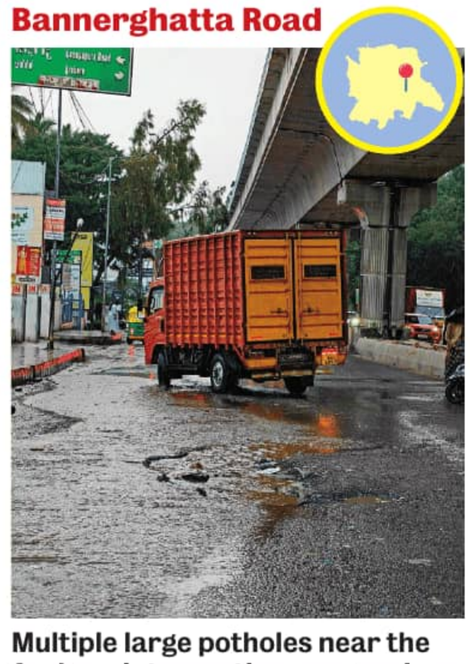
Crater threat

KH Road

A large pothole has emerged on KH Road, demanding immediate repair from authorities to prevent accidents and ease vehicle movement.

Unsafe stretch

Bannerghatta Road



Multiple large potholes near the Arekere intersection pose serious risks to motorists, requiring urgent repair to ensure commuter safety.

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Monday, September 29, 2025
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Advertorial Promotional Feature

Healthy Heart, Healthy Life

With heart diseases on the rise across India, experts emphasise that prevention begins at the dining table and continues with everyday habits

Cardiologists are increasingly concerned about the surge in lifestyle-related heart ailments, particularly among younger populations. A senior cardiologist at a leading Bengaluru hospital, explains: "We are seeing patients in their 30s and 40s coming in with heart problems that were once common only after 60. Sedentary lifestyles, poor diet, and stress are the main triggers."

The message from doctors is clear: small, consistent changes in daily living can go a long way in safeguarding heart health.

Diet: The First Line of Defense

When it comes to cardiac care, diet is the most talked-about factor. Nutritionists and doctors insist that what we eat directly influences how well our heart functions. A nutrition specialist, notes: "Excessive intake of fried foods, refined sugar, and processed items puts immense strain on the heart. A balanced plate with vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean proteins should be the foundation." She further recommends limiting salt intake, which is often hidden in packaged foods. Too much sodium raises blood pressure, one of the leading causes of heart attacks. Healthy oils such as olive or mustard oil in moderation are advised, while trans fats should be completely avoided.

Hydration is another often-overlooked aspect. Doctors say drinking enough water improves circulation and keeps blood pressure under control. Green tea and herbal drinks can replace sugary beverages to cut down on empty calories.

The Role of Experience & Lifestyle

Beyond diet, the way we experience life also has a profound impact on heart health. Stress, long working hours, and lack of sleep silently harm the heart over time. A preventive cardiologist, emphasizes: "Mental health is as important as physical health. Stress hormones like cortisol increase blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Regular relaxation techniques—be it yoga, meditation, or even a daily walk—act as natural protectors."

Doctors also recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity five days a week. Activities such as brisk walking, cycling, or swimming strengthen the heart muscle and improve circulation. Even simple lifestyle choices, like taking stairs instead of elevators or stretching between long desk hours, make a difference.

Sleep is another vital pillar. Experts stress that 7 to 8 hours of quality rest each night helps the heart repair and recover. Sleep deprivation, they warn, has been linked to irregular heartbeat and hypertension.

A Collective Responsibility

Doctors underline that taking care of the heart is not just an individual responsibility but a collective one. Families should encourage healthy cooking habits, workplaces should promote fitness breaks, and communities should create safe walking spaces.

"Heart health is a lifelong investment. The earlier we start, the longer we benefit," said a senior cardiologist. **BMB**

Sharp rise in heart disease cases among Karnataka schoolchildren

A concerning rise in heart-related ailments among schoolchildren in Karnataka has come to light through health checks conducted under the National Child Health Programme (RBSK). Officials reported that out of 4.45 lakh children screened during 2024–25, as many as 9,182 were found to be suffering from congenital or acquired heart conditions. Of these, 8,124 children have been referred for specialized care, while 273 have already undergone corrective surgeries.

Health experts warn that undiagnosed heart disease in children can severely impact growth, learning, and overall development. "Early detection is crucial because timely treatment can improve quality of life and, in many cases, save lives," explained a senior pediatric cardiologist. The programme's findings have sparked calls for more frequent school-based screenings and awareness campaigns for parents and teachers.

District-level data shows that Belagavi reported the highest number of cases at 1,514, followed by significant figures in Uttara Kannada, Koppal, Kalaburagi, and Tumakuru. Doctors attribute the rising incidence to a mix of factors, ranging from congenital birth defects to modern lifestyle influences. **BMB**

Advertorial

Every beat counts - YOUR HEART NEEDS ATTENTION

29 September

On the occasion of World Heart Day, let's emphasize the importance of prioritizing heart health. Every year on September 29, people around the world observe World Heart Day—a reminder that protecting our heart is the cornerstone of a long and healthy life. Heart disease remains one of the leading causes of death globally, yet it is also among the most preventable one.

In India, nearly one in four heart attack occurs in people under the age of 40. Even more alarming is that, Post-COVID trends are equally concerning. Statistics show that the incidence of heart attack is on rise with every passing year. People living in Indian sub-continent are genetically more prone to heart diseases compared to those living in the western countries. Like most of the chronic illnesses heart disease also is a lifestyle disease, it's a price we are paying for our reckless lifestyle. Most of the youngsters don't pay attention to their dietary habits and physical activity. Junk food has made way to our daily food menu, and sedentary life has made matters worse.

It's a known fact that prevention is always better than cure. In a similar way heart diseases can be prevented if we adopt a healthy lifestyle. People with risk factors for heart diseases like Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension, Smoking, Alcohol Consumtion, High cholesterol levels and those with strong family history should take extra precautions to monitor their health. Those with above risk factors should get their cardiac screening done annually irrespective of their age as a preventive measure.

Treatment for heart ailments has advanced enormously in recent years, which has translated into better patient care. Reaching the hospital in the golden hour during an heart attack, not only saves lives but also prevents irreversible damage to the heart. Coronary Angioplasty is considered as a time-tested treatment for saving lives of patients with heart attacks. Heart attacks can recur in patients who don't change their lifestyle that includes quitting smoking & alcohol.

Dr. Kishore K S
Head of the Department of Cardiology
Sagar Hospitals, Bangalore

Some patients who recover from heart attacks tend to develop irregular heartbeats in long run which can pose problems. Such patients may require Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (AICD), a pacemaker like device which terminates abnormal troublesome heart rhythms. As a preventive measure a fibre and protein rich diet is recommended in addition to 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity everyday.

One should remember sleep deprivation is considered as one of the risk factors for heart diseases. Each individual needs at least 8 hrs of quality sleep every day. Those with pre-existing Diabetes and Hypertension should take steps to keep it under control to prevent heart diseases. Mental stress has engulfed all of us owing to the fast-paced lifestyle we have adopted. Stress management is equally important in preventing heart diseases.

One should take timeout of their busy routine to destress in the form of pursuing a hobby or doing activities which can calm the mind. Meditation is one of the simple and time-tested tool to calm the mind and destress. Spare at least few minutes in a day to meditate and see how it changes you and the world around you. Heart disease is preventable; all you have to do is to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

This World Heart Day, make a pledge: Care for your heart, inspire others to do the same, and build habits that let you live longer.

Citizens demand metro phase 3A, reject expensive twin tunnel

Overwhelming poll response shows Bengaluru residents prefer Metro expansion, citing high costs, lack of access, and missing transparency in the tunnel project

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher
@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

An open poll conducted by a city-based civic activist has revealed that citizens want Metro Phase 3A to be built over the proposed Twin Tunnel Road (TTR) project.

Nearly 1,400 citizens participated in three polls on social media regarding various aspects of the TTR. Of the 378 who responded to a poll on the tunnel road's usability, 88% said they would not use it, citing the steep cost of around 300 for a single trip from Hebbal to Central Silk Board Junction. In another poll with 438 respondents, more than 90% favoured investment in public transport systems over a tunnel road. A third poll received 579 responses, with 97% backing Metro Phase 3A instead of the tunnel project.

Civic experts have argued that the tunnel road fails to provide equitable access and could be redundant once Metro Phase 3 is operational. They point out that the project has been pushed forward without adequate public debate, environmental scrutiny, or technical review.

"We started the open poll to give citizens a voice. The state government is rushing ahead with the project without transparent consultation. A tender has already been invited, despite mobility experts and environmentalists raising serious concerns," said Rajkumar Dugar, a civic expert and founder of Citizen for Citizen, who initiated the poll.

Public polls reveal Bengaluru residents want investments channelled into sustainable public transport systems, not expensive, exclusive road projects serving a few

Nearly 97% of citizens polled want Metro Phase 3A instead of the costly Twin Tunnel Road. Experts warn the tunnel lacks equity, transparency, and environmental scrutiny, urging the government to reconsider plans

Activists contend that the tunnel project from Hebbal to Silk Board should be scrapped and replaced with scientific, evidence-based alternatives that prioritize sustainable development. They stress that decision-makers must weigh expert advice and environmental impacts before finalizing infrastructure plans. Many citizens believe large investments should instead strengthen long-term mobility solutions that benefit all income groups equitably.

The Twin Tunnel Road has faced significant opposition from citizens and civil society groups, some of which have already taken legal action. On September 25, the Karnataka High Court issued a notice to the state government in response to a petition filed by residents. The petition seeks to quash the July tender notification for the project and challenges a letter from the State Environmental Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), which exempted the project from environmental clearance requirements.

Earlier, on September 17, the Bengaluru Bus Prayanikara Vedike moved the National Green Tribunal (NGT) seeking a restraining order against the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (B-SMILE). The petition urged the tribunal to prevent awarding of any contract, construction, or preparatory activity linked to the tunnel road.

On September 10, the NGT's Southern Bench issued notices to the state government, GBA, SEIAA, B-SMILE, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), and project consultants. This was in response to a petition by Bengaluru Praja Vedike and other citizens, who highlighted procedural and environmental flaws in the proposal.

Public resistance to the tunnel road is growing stronger, with experts, civic bodies, and environmentalists uniting to demand that funds be redirected toward improving Bengaluru's mass transit systems. As legal and environmental challenges mount, the fate of the TTR project remains uncertain, leaving citizens closely watching whether their overwhelming opposition will finally be acknowledged by the government.

K'ka taxes on fuel ignites public anger

The Centre's move to simplify GST has sparked louder calls for Karnataka to ease state-level taxes that citizens say have become crushing. Since the Congress government assumed power in 2023, hikes in sales tax, excise duty, stamp duty, registration fees, and other levies have together generated nearly ₹14,000 crore in extra annual revenue. But the sharpest impact has come from fuel. Petrol continues to bear a sales tax of 29.84%, unchanged since June 2024, while diesel has seen steep increases—from 14.34% before June 2024, to 18.44% mid-June, and 21.17% from January 1, 2025. Traders and civic groups argue this has strained household budgets, while pushing up transport and essential commodity costs.

Ravi Kumar, a trader, said diesel hikes alone translate to about ₹2 more per litre. Activists add that higher diesel costs have even raised fares for BMTC and metro commuters. Opposition parties, trade bodies, and citizen groups are now pressing the government to cut fuel taxes in line with GST simplification, insisting it would ease inflationary pressure and reduce industrial costs. **–BMB**

Lokayukta probes ₹5,006 crore pipeline scam

The Karnataka Lokayukta has issued notices to senior Urban Development Department officials over allegations of causing massive losses to civic bodies by fixing nominal fees for laying city gas distribution (CGD) pipelines. Those named include former Additional Chief Secretary Rakesh Singh (currently RERA Chairman), former Deputy Secretary Tukaram Kalyankar, Under Secretary NK Lakshmisagar, Section Officer Chennakeshava, and Assistant G.R. Hemanth.

The complaint, filed by the KRS Party, alleges that while the BJP government did not approve the CGD policy in Cabinet, the Congress government cleared it, slashing licence fees from ₹1,857 per metre plus ₹100 supervision charges to just ₹1 per metre. These moves allegedly benefitted private gas companies while depriving local bodies of revenue.

Before the policy came into force on November 7, 2023, gas companies reportedly paid ₹281.68 crore for 4,690 km of pipelines across Karnataka. Afterward, only ₹20.56 lakh was collected for 1,137 km. BBMP alone is said to have lost ₹7.01 crore. Despite warnings from the Public Works Department, the proposal was cleared. Officials told to reply by October 6 or face action. **–BMB**

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Angry exit

Half the attendees stormed out in protest during the recent Dasara inauguration. As Booker prize awardee and Chief Guest Banu Mushtaq concluded her inaugural speech, female students from various hostels stood up and began leaving. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah gestured them to sit, but when some continued to cause a stir, District In-charge Minister HC Mahadevappa was speaking when MLA GT Devegowda came to the mic, urging, "The Chief Minister is speaking. Please sit down." Even as Mahadevappa finished and the CM began, a few still got up, prompting an irritated Siddaramaiah to remark, "If you can't sit through an hour of this program, why did you come? You should have stayed home," and instructed the police to "seat them back inside."

Delhi meet

In New Delhi recently, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar met AICC general secretary KC Venugopal at Indira Bhavan for over half an hour to discuss ongoing political developments. When journalists asked about rumours of a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah, DSK quipped that he isn't insane to seek a meeting, dismissing the speculation. He added that the Mekedatu case, originally scheduled for Tuesday, has been postponed due to constitutional bench proceedings. Responding to Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis's comments on the Alamatti project, DSK said Union ministers, BJP MPs, and leaders including Bommmai, Jagdish Shettar, HD Kumaraswamy, and Shobha Karandlaje should address the matter.

Tour halt

In a move that's sure to cramp some suitcases, the Karnataka government has slammed the brakes on official foreign trips for state officers, issuing a strict order to enforce the ban immediately until the end of the year. Following Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's directive, the Department of Administrative Reforms made it clear that any officer planning future overseas jaunts must first account for lessons learned from past trips—because apparently, many officials who toured abroad between August 2024 and July 2025 never filed their reports. So, before anyone even dreams of boarding a plane with a "for government work" badge, they'll need to prove they've actually studied what they supposedly went abroad to study.

Pothole pandemic

It's not just Bengaluru—Delhi's roads near the Prime Minister's residence have potholes too," quipped Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, pointing to the city's rainy-season road woes. Speaking to reporters, he revealed that around 1,000 potholes are being filled daily across Bengaluru, with authorities promising to patch them all soon. While this is a nationwide headache, Bengaluru seems to be taking the pothole crown, he joked. Shivakumar also threw a subtle dig at previous administrations, noting that if the BJP government had focused on quality road construction, the city wouldn't be sinking into these cratered messes today.

DC office property seized

In a truly wild turn of events in Bagalkot, a court order to seize property was actually carried out, and the unlucky target? None other than the Deputy Commissioner's office! Turns out, the DC's office had been dragging its feet on paying around 170 crore in compensation to farmers Ravanasaiddaiah Mathapati, Basavaraja Mathapati, and Krishna Jiragala for land acquired for rehabilitation. After the court's order was ignored, the Fifth Additional Court had enough and issued a seizure warrant. So, on Tuesday, they literally walked into the DC's office and confiscated everything from computers to furniture, handing it all over to the court. It seems if you're going to delay paying up, you might lose your desk. **—Sridhar Vivan**

Swift police action foils ₹1.01 crore dacoity, 8 arrested

In a swift operation, Hulimavu police arrested eight men who allegedly kidnapped a couple and their car driver, assaulted them, and looted Rs 1.1 crore in cash in a filmy-style heist.

Police said the incident unfolded on Saturday evening when RR Nagar-based arecanut trader Mohan instructed his driver, Hemant, to collect money from Electronic City. Around 6 pm, Hemant reached Akshaya Park in Akshayanagar, within Hulimavu Police Station limits, and called the number provided by his employer.

At the location, real estate businessman Motiram arrived with his wife in a car. During the meeting, they showed Hemant cash bags kept in the rear seat. Just then, two men approached, claiming they needed to 'check' and 'video record' the proceedings. One of them filmed the car, the couple, the driver, and the money, before suddenly assaulting the complainant and the woman when questioned. Sensing danger, the couple locked their car doors and tried to escape, but the suspects chased them on a bike, rammed into their vehicle, and forced it towards a deserted stretch where they were intercepted.

Police said more associates later joined the gang, who then abducted the victims, assaulted them, and carried out the robbery. Even as the victims remained in captivity, Hulimavu Police Inspector and his team, who were on patrolling duty near DLF Junction, received information and rushed to the scene. Within 15 minutes, they apprehended eight accused persons, recovered the entire looted cash, and seized the car and bike used in the crime.

A case of dacoity, illegal confinement, and assault has been registered at Hulimavu Police Station. Investigation is underway to trace other possible associates of the gang. **–BMB**

CRIME FILES

Cop in dock for lax work

A police sub-inspector from High Grounds station has been suspended after he allowed a suspect to walk free without questioning or completing basic paperwork. The suspect had been picked up during a special drive and brought in for inquiry. However, the PSI, who was present at the station, chose to release him without recording any details.

The lapse came to light when senior officials returned from the drive only to learn that the suspect had already been let off. The matter was escalated to the DCP and later to the city police commissioner.

Taking a serious view of the incident, the PSI was placed under suspension for dereliction of duty, and a departmental inquiry has been initiated.This marks the sixth suspension of a police officer in Bengaluru within a week. Earlier, inspectors from Koramangala and Halasuru Gate were among five officers booked for corruption and misconduct. **–BMB**

Man arrested for stealing gold jewellery

The Nandini Layout police have arrested a man accused of gold jewellery theft, recovering ornaments worth Rs 3 lakh that had been melted and hidden at his home. According to police, the complainant, had invited a car driver known to him to his home on August 26. After asking him to prepare breakfast, the complainant left his gold jewellery on the TV stand and went for a bath. When he returned, the ornaments were missing and the driver had disappeared. His phone was switched off.

During investigation, police picked up the accused near his house in Annapoorneshwari Nagar on September 5. He confessed during questioning to stealing the ornaments.

Caretaker turns thief

The RT Nagar police have arrested a woman caretaker on charges of stealing a gold chain from an elderly man under her care, recovering 26 grams of jewellery worth Rs 2.5 lakh. According to police, the complainants, who run a health care service in Kalyan Nagar, had deputed the woman to care for a senior citizen in an apartment in RT Nagar. On September 17, the caretaker bathed the elderly man and allegedly removed the gold chain from his neck. The victim alerted the police. On September 18, police picked up the accused near the CBI bus stop on Ballari Main Road. **–BMB**

Rani Chennamma Force launched to protect women in public spaces

Initiative to curb harassment and raise awareness on safety, cybercrimes, and drug menace; teams to also provide self-defence training and monitor safety of women in workplaces

Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com
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Led by women police officials, initiative aims to ensure safety and prevent harassment incidents

To ensure women's safety in public spaces, the North Division police have launched the 'Rani Chennamma Force' to check incidents of harassment and create awareness on crime prevention. The initiative comes under the guidance of North Division DCP Babasab Nemagoud and is led by a woman inspector, supported by four sub-inspectors and 20 women constables. The force, named after Karnataka's legendary freedom fighter Rani Chennamma, aims to provide visible security in schools, colleges, parks, bus stops, shopping malls, and other areas frequented by women and young girls.

High-alert patrolling from morning to night

A senior police official said that the Rani Chennamma Force will operate daily between 9 am and 9 pm, patrolling on bikes to keep a close watch on public areas. Officers will remain on high alert and will immediately apprehend offenders found harassing or teasing women and take them to the police station for legal action. "Women's safety and crime prevention will be the continuous focus of this special task force. Their daily responsibilities will be reviewed regularly, and timely instructions will be issued," said the official.

Self-defence training for students

The 20-member team will function in smaller groups, each covering different localities. They will also visit schools and colleges to provide self-defence training to girl students. The training will include practical lessons on how to escape from chain-snatchers, resist attacks with sharp weapons, and safeguard themselves in sudden danger. Students will also be educated on the importance of staying alert in public spaces.

Awareness on sexual harassment and cybercrime

The Rani Chennamma Force will conduct awareness drives on sexual harassment, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) Act, and the importance of reporting offences. Workshops on cyber safety will also be organised to educate young women about online frauds, social media traps, and privacy risks. Students and employees will be guided on how to protect personal information online, avoid falling prey to fraudsters, and seek immediate police help by calling the cyber helpline number 1930 if victimised, added the officials.

Force will operate daily between 9 am and 9 pm, keeping close watch on public areas and apprehending offenders found harassing or teasing women, says official

Campaign against drugs

The force will extend its awareness efforts to the issue of drug abuse. Young women, particularly college students, will be sensitised to the dangers of drug peddling and consumption. Police will also collaborate with anti-drug committees in schools and colleges as part of community policing initiatives.

Focus on workplace safety

"Given that a large number of women are employed in garments, malls, and private companies, the Rani Chennamma Force will also make periodic visits to such workplaces," said an official, adding that the officers will coordinate with internal complaints committees to assess women employees' safety concerns and ensure prompt action to resolve issues.

Postal Department revises speed post tariffs from Oct 1

The Postal Department has revised Speed Post tariffs for the first time since 2012, effective October 1, citing rising operational costs and the need to invest in innovations. The new rates apply to documents and parcels, with GST charged separately, while value-added services like OTP-based secure delivery (Rs 5 plus GST per article) and registered delivery (Rs 15 plus GST per article) will be introduced to enhance reliability, security, and convenience. Customers will also benefit from online payment, SMS-based delivery notifications, real-time tracking, and simplified booking facilities.

To make services affordable, students will receive a 10 per cent concession on Speed Post charges, while newly enrolled bulk customers will get a 5 per cent discount. The revised tariff chart specifies rates based on weight slabs—for instance, articles up to 250g will cost between Rs 24 and Rs 77 depending on distance, while those between 251g and 500g will range from Rs 28 to Rs 86. With these changes, the department aims to strengthen Speed Post's position as the country's preferred premium delivery service. **–BMB**

Plastic ban flouted despite seizure of 1,012 MT in 3 years

Despite the state-wide ban on single-use plastic since March 2016, its use continues unchecked across Karnataka, from street vendors and markets to rural areas. In the past three years alone, 1,012 metric tonnes of banned plastic have been seized in 1,65,964 inspections, and Rs 5.6 crore collected in fines. Records show that 1.25 lakh raids were conducted in 2022–23, but inspections dropped drastically to 22,192 in 2023–24 and 18,111 in 2024–25, exposing weakening enforcement. Authorities seized 620 MT of plastic in 2022–23, 169 MT in 2023–24, and 223 MT in 2024–25, but awareness campaigns, raids, and penalties have failed to change trader and consumer behavior.

The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) has initiated awareness drives among vendors, manufacturers, and students, and the government has ordered district-level monitoring committees for PET bottle waste disposal from June 16, 2025. Yet, single-use plastic items remain widely in circulation despite being banned. Officials admit that while fines are collected to meet targets, sustained vigilance and compliance remain a challenge. **–BMB**

RBI issues directions for digital payment transaction authentication

BM Finance Fundas

The Reserve Bank ofIndia (RBI) has released its guidelines on the authentication mechanism framework for digital payment transaction authentication. These directions will come into effect from April 1, 2026, unless stated otherwise for specific provisions, the RBI says in a statement.

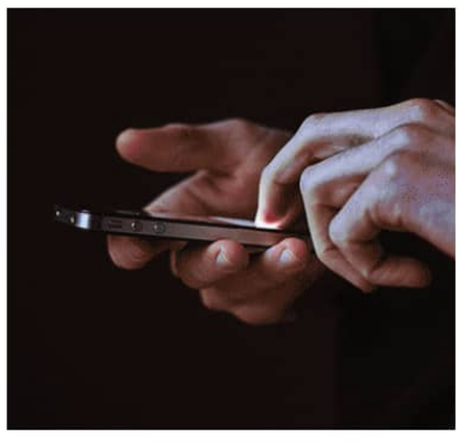
As per the statement from the RBI, the directions, inter alia, focus on the following:

The RBI says that all digital payment transactions in India are required to meet the norm of two factors of authentication. While no specific factor was mandated for authentication, the digital payments ecosystem has primarily adopted SMS-based One Time Password (OTP) as the additional factor.

Factor for digital payment transaction authentication

The central bank says that the factors of authentication can be from 'something the user has', 'something the user knows' or 'something the user is' and may comprise, inter-alia, password, SMS-based OTP, passphrase, PIN, card hardware, software token, fingerprint, or any other form of biometrics (device native or Aadhaar-based).

RBI says that all digital payment transactions shall be authenticated by at least two distinct factors of authentication as defined in Paragraph-5(f), unless exempted.



The central bank says that be ensured that for digital payment transactions, other than card present transactions, at least one of the factors of authentication is dynamically created or proven, i.e., the proof of possession of the factor, being sent as part of the transaction, is unique to that transaction.

The RBI says that issuers may, in line with their internal risk management policies, identify transactions for evaluation against behavioural / contextual parameters such as transaction location, user behaviour patterns, device attributes, historical transaction profile, etc.

According to the RBI's Directions issued on September 25, 2025, "Based on the perceived risk associated with the transaction, additional checks beyond the minimum two-factor authentication may be resorted to. Issuers may also explore using DigiLocker as a platform for notification and confirmation for high-risk transactions."

Sanjay Tripathy, CEO & Co-Founder, BRISKPE, a cross-border payments platform, says, "RBI by mandating risk-based checks in its latest directions has formalized a framework that encourages a variety of authentication mechanisms beyond just SMS-based OTPs. The specific requirement for validating an Additional Factor of Authentication (AFA) in cross-border card-not-present transactions is a critical step to increase trust and reduce risks, which will ultimately benefit both businesses and their customers. It provides a clear, uniform standard that aligns with global best practices and will strengthen India's position in the international digital payments landscape. The move will foster a more robust and compliant ecosystem, ensuring smoother and more secure cross-border transactions for all."

For cross-border transactions

The RBI says that a risk-based mechanism for handling all cross-border CNP transactions shall also be put in place by card issuers by October 01, 2026. **ET Online**

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I, Indumathy Pasupaleti w/o Anjaneya Prasad Sani R/o Prestige silver oak villa 23, Ecc road, Pattandur Agrahara, Whitefield, Bengaluru 560066 have changed my name to Indumathi Sani. I shall called by this name for all purposes

I, Bhagyalakshmi B R/O no 37 6th crs Attur mn rd Yelahanka B'lore 560064 Have changed my name Bhagyalakshmi Raghu to Bhagyalakshmi B for all future purposes.

I Angeline John Balakrishnan W/O, Jonah Smiler Maduram R/o No 1035 6th Cross Ashok Nagar, Bsk 1st Stage 2nd Block, Bengaluru - 560050 have changed my name to Angeline John.

I Sheela Uday W/O, Udaya Udduriah R/o Banavara Raste, Somwarpet Taluku, Masagodu Village, Kodagu - 571236 have changed my name to Sheela Udaya.

I Lakshmi Devi Goenka W/O, Shiv Shankar Goenka R/o No 731, 17th Cross, 24th Main, 6th Phase, Jp Nagar, Bengaluru - 560078 have changed my name to Laxmi Devi Goenka.

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Workers attacked 'just for fun'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Banaswadi railway track, these kinds of incidents happen a lot. They usually target North Indians or if the delivery agent they feel is not from Bengaluru. They assault us and snatch money, food, and mobiles. Even in DJ Halli, such incidents are common, especially in remote areas," a delivery agent shared.

In another incident a food delivery executive was brutally assaulted after he allegedly arrived late with a food order. The incident, which took place near Shobha Theatre in Bapuji Nagar, was caught on camera. The video shows two men confronting the delivery agent before the argument turned violent. One of the accused hit him on the head with a plastic water can, while another struck him with a chair. The clip further shows an attacker, appearing intoxicated and unsteady, attempting to mount the victim's bike during the scuffle. In July 2025, a Swiggy delivery agent was brutally assaulted by three men at a traffic signal in a road rage incident. The attackers, who were allegedly drunk, got upset when the agent stopped for a red light.

"Gig workers are increasingly facing attacks during night times, often as a result of aggressive behaviour from some customers. There is a lack of support mechanism from the platform companies and the gig workers are subjected to difficult and unsafe working conditions.

Since many work during late hours, they frequently encounter individuals returning from parties or night shifts, some of whom would be in an inebriated condition. This makes gig workers the most vulnerable targets and they become victims of rude behaviour, theft and assault," said Vinay Sarathy, United Food Delivery Partners' Union President.

KAUSHIK J

Why are gig workers easy targets?

Many delivery workers rely on electric bikes, which are slower than petrol bikes, and often mount their mobile phones on the handlebars for navigation. This visibility makes them vulnerable. In addition to theft targeting gig workers, there have also been instances where delivery apps were used to transport drug parcels, further complicating their safety risks.

A delivery agent explained that such assaults are becoming increasingly common, but many victims choose not to report them. "Most drivers and delivery partners avoid escalating the matter to police officials, fearing legal complications and lengthy procedures. We already work under constant pressure to complete trips or deliveries while navigating traffic and long hours. On top of that, facing harassment from drunk individuals is unacceptable. Without proper protection or redressal mechanisms, many workers remain silent out of fear. Yet, they continue to work because they have no other option. Families depend on them, and they need to earn their livelihood," he said.

According to Sarathy, the recurrence of such incidents highlight the urgent need for stronger safety and support mechanisms with the initiative of the platform companies. "We have even proposed that two workers be assigned together for deliveries in remote or high-risk areas particularly during odd hours to ensure their safety," he said.

Citizens encouraged to adopt trees on their streets

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

not have the required manpower. In the given scenario, citizens will have to come forward," said Biju Cherayath, a resident of Cook Town and an artist creating environmental awareness through her art form.

The citizen group says the idea is to invite residents, individually or in groups, to adopt a single tree or trees across a given street. Adoption will put complete responsibility on adopters to protect their trees from every kind of threat.

"I planted a sapling more than a decade ago and have been tending to it regularly. I also celebrated its 10th birthday to create awareness about the concept of 'tree adoption'. The idea of having Citizens Tree Committees will ensure better protection of avenue trees," said Deepak BJ, a resident of Rajajinagar.

Notably, under the Karnataka Preservation of Trees Act, 1976, individuals or organisations can adopt a tree for a specified period to manage its maintenance and preservation. As per the Act, the Tree Authority may permit any individual, body corporate, or institution to adopt any tree for a certain period, who will be responsible for the maintenance and preservation.

"Since tree adoption is permissible under the Act, the process should be followed. Having Citizens Tree Committees is a welcome step, and citizens should be actively involved in keeping a watch on trees in their neighbourhood, in monitoring the trees, and alerting the authorities if the need arises.

However, since contractors hired by GBA to carry out plantation activities, they should ensure that the contractors are looking after the saplings," said Dattatreya Devare, trustee of Bangalore Environment Trust and a city-based environmentalist.

BM SIMPLY PUT

As Indian Air Force retires iconic jet fighter, a look into the past and future

Supersonic sunset: Farewell MiG-21

Indian Air Force officers during the 'MiG-21 Operational Flying Culmination Ceremony' at Chandigarh Air Force Station (AFS), on September 26

After 62 years of high-speed interceptions, daring sorties, and defining India's air power, the iconic MiG-21 finally soared into the sunset on its farewell flight. From wars to peacetime vigilance, the MiG-21's roar will echo in Indian skies forever. BM explains why the MiG had to be retired and what lies ahead for the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Why is the MiG-21 being retired after six decades of service?

The MiG-21 is being retired due to aging airframes, increasing operational risks, obsolete avionics, and limited survivability in contemporary multi-role combat scenarios, making it unsuitable for modern warfare while the IAF transitions to technologically advanced, indigenous platforms like the Tejas Mk-1A.

What strategic role did the MiG-21 play in India's air defense architecture?

It served as the backbone of India's fighter fleet, providing high-speed interception, air defense during the 1965 and 1971 wars, the 1999 Kargil conflict, and the 2019 Balakot strike, while shaping operational doctrines and contributing to India's deterrence posture.

How did the MiG-21 influence pilot training and operational culture?

Operating the MiG-21 required extreme adaptability and precision flying, as pilots managed high-altitude intercepts, low-level night strike missions, and austere cockpits without simulators, cultivating generations skilled in improvisation, tactical innovation, and operational resilience.

What were the principal operational limitations of the MiG-21 in contemporary combat?

Despite its speed and agility, the MiG-21 faced restricted visibility, limited payload versatility, outdated avionics, and insufficient survivability against modern air defense systems, constraining its relevance in today's multi-role, networked combat environment.

How did the MiG-21 perform in major combat engagements?

It executed high-speed interception and strike roles in multiple conflicts, proving operational flexibility and reliability, often being the first responder in high-intensity combat while demonstrating the aircraft's strategic utility despite technological limitations.

Why has Tejas been chosen as the successor to the MiG-21?

Tejas Mk-1A offers multi-role capability, advanced avionics, precision strike potential, and high indigenous content, ensuring the IAF phases out legacy jets while enhancing self-reliance, survivability, and operational versatility in modern warfare.

What are the procurement specifics and technological highlights of the Tejas Mk-1A program?

The Defence Ministry contracted HAL for 97 Tejas Mk-1A jets—68 single-seaters and 29 twin-seaters—at 62,370 crore, incorporating over 64% indigenous content, Uttam AESA radar, Swayam Raksha Kavach, and advanced control actuators, with deliveries starting 2027-28 over six years.

How does Tejas enhance India's operational and strategic readiness?

Tejas restores squadron strength, enables operations in high-threat environments, integrates advanced sensors and weapons, strengthens multi-role capability, and supports domestic aerospace industry growth, aligning with India's long-term modernization and self-reliance goals.

Why was the MiG-21 named so, and why was it nicknamed the "Flying Coffin"?

The MiG-21 is named after its design bureau and model number: "MiG" stands for Mikoyan-Gurevich, the Soviet design bureau founded by Artem Mikoyan and Mikhail Gurevich, while 21 denotes the specific model in the bureau's fighter aircraft series. Over decades of service, it earned the nickname "Flying Coffin" due to its high accident rate caused by aging airframes, limited avionics, and the demanding nature of supersonic flight. Despite this, pilots and enthusiasts also referred to it as the "Balalaika" for its triangular shape and, in certain IAF squadrons, the "Panther", reflecting its speed, agility, and iconic status in Indian skies.

How does the MiG-21-to-Tejas transition reflect broader defense modernisation trends in India?

The shift underscores India's move from legacy foreign-origin platforms to indigenously developed, technologically advanced aircraft, emphasizing operational capability, domestic industrial growth, defense self-reliance, and alignment with strategic modernization objectives.

SOCIALTATTLE

IMAGE OF THE DAY

u/SwatCatsDext • 18h ago
A letter written by "HRH Sri Krishnaraja Wadiyar" to his close aides on the 25th anniversary of his rule.
History/ಇತಿಹಾಸ

A letter by HRH Sri Krishnaraja Wadiyar to his close aides on the 25th anniversary of his rule. Posted on Reddit by the user SwatCatsDext in r/Bengaluru.

WHAT'S TWEETING?

@ImMKR makes an important point after the crowd crush that killed scores in Tamil Nadu. The X user posts: Incidents like #Karur or #Bengaluru will keep repeating unless we build competence in crowd management/guardrails

Manoj Kumar R
@ImMKR
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Incidents like #Karur or #Bengaluru will keep repeating unless we build competence in crowd management/guardrails in place.
Stars will draw massive crowds, and people will rush to see them. The situation is predictable - so why not create systems that prevent such tragedies?

in place. Stars will draw massive crowds, and people will rush to see them. The situation is predictable – so why not create systems that prevent such tragedies?

@arivuexpress wants to draw the CM's attention to a stretch of a road: Dear @siddaramaiah @DKShivakumar see the condition of the main primary road called #Hosaroad which connects Ecity to Bellandur. Drainage work was stopped by your own party ppl. We have been suffering for the past three yrs. HELP MAADI. COME TO HOSA ROAD. @CivicOp india

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@gouthamcp07 points to yet another road where pothole filling was done in a hasty manner: This is how potholes were and this is how they are filled in Namma B'luru. @DKShivakumar @CMofKarnataka This road is to d famous Exide factory, schools and A'ments. @osd_cmkarnataka Area is ruled by your own MLA @MLAShivanna from last 10+yrs @ChristinMP_@BangaloreMirror

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This is how potholes were and this is how they are filled in Namma B'luru. @DKShivakumar @CMofKarnataka This road is to d famous Exide factory, schools and A'ments. @osd_cmkarnataka Area is ruled by your own MLA @MLAShivanna from last 10+yrs @ChristinMP_ @BangaloreMirror
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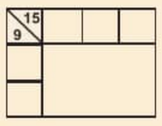
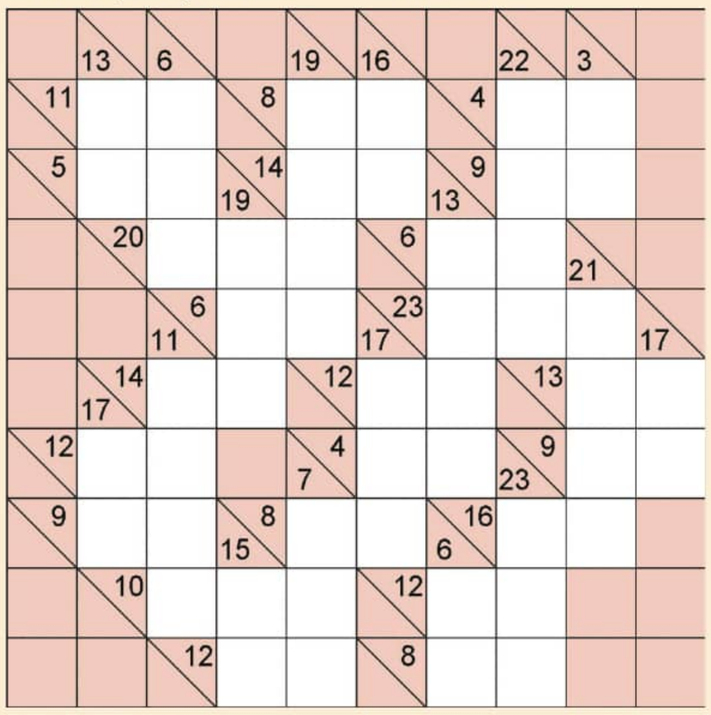
Kakuro

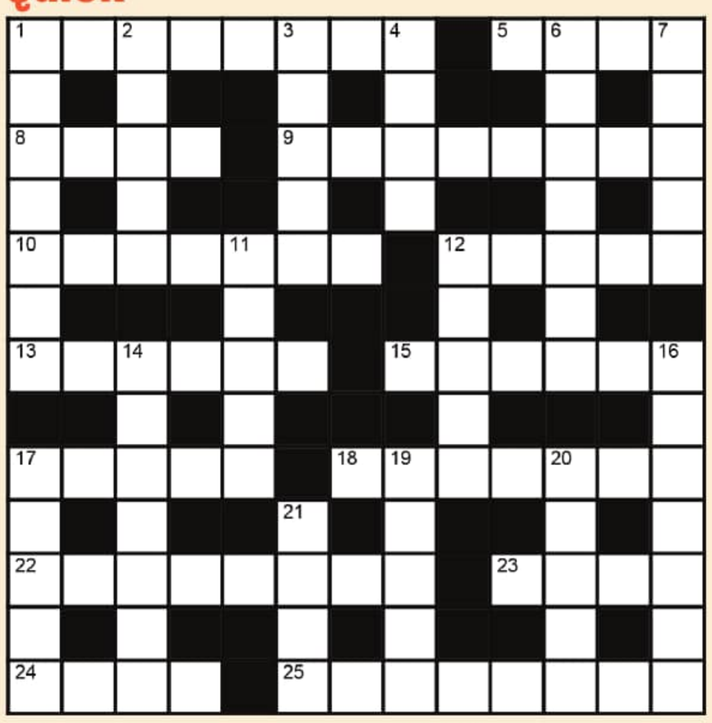
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Computer applications (8)
5 Goad (4)
8 Self-confident words (1,3)
9 Envy (8)
10 India's old-time wicket keeper Syed ____ (7)
12 Criminal (5)
13 Pork curry (6)
15 Reddish brown (6)
17 Possessed (5)
18 Adding details to, in a way? (7)
22 Troilus and ___ play by Shakespeare? (8)
23 42 in Rome (4)
24 Beams of light (4)
25 A type of tadpole (8)

DOWN

1 Heist (5,2)
2 Natural ability (5)
3 One of the Pandavas (5)
4 And others, in Latin (2,2)
6 You spend them in Russia (7)
7 Senior member of a group (5)
11 Hurt (5)
12 Variable (5)
14 Convent or cloister (7)
16 Labelling (7)
17 Academy award (5)
19 ___ of : profit from (5)
20 Acquired relative (2-3)
21 A speech disorder (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: C EQUALS T

CXI JRZC ULCXIDCMW CXMDA UQRLC LZ MZ RLN WUYUWMCG CR WNIUCI, CR RKINWRJI, CR IDELNI, CR CNUDZVRNJ, CR SRKI UDE CR QI ANIUCIN CXUD RLN ZLVVINMDA.

Linemaro

When I was walking by, I noticed you stalking me, so what's up?

Mindchow

When your friends begin to flatter you on how young you look, it's a sure sign you're getting old

Joke of the day

For three years everything was going great, and then she just upped and left me to find a guy who wouldn't hit her

Loop

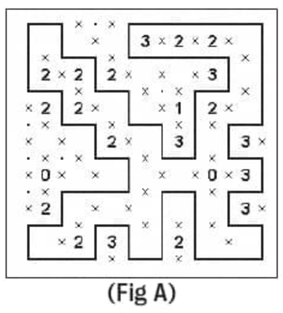
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

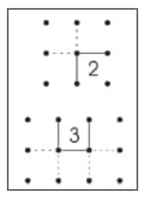
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

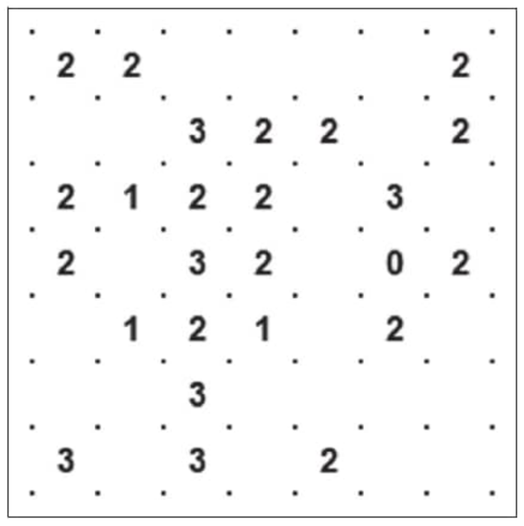
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



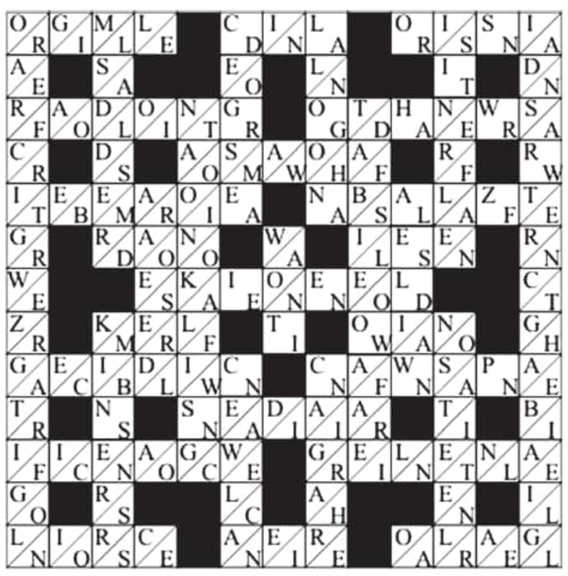
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



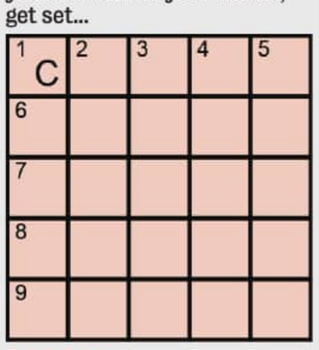
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Retch; 6 Do roe; 7 Runed; 8 Males; 9 Sis by

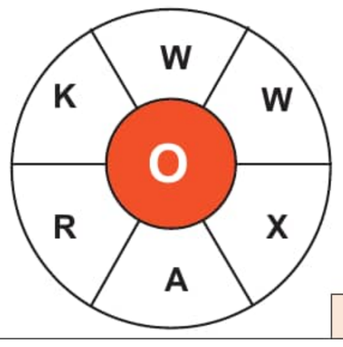
DOWN

1 Mr Cub; 2 On hey; 3 Sad Ed; 4 Leers; 5 Riots

Mensapuzzle

What is missing from the last circle?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

01 Average; **02** Good; **03** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

7								1
9			8		4			3
		8	7		1	5		
	9	2		6		7	1	
		7				9		
	8	4		9		3	5	
		3	6		9	4		
5			1		3			7
8								9

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 4

1 4 4 5

Medium = 30

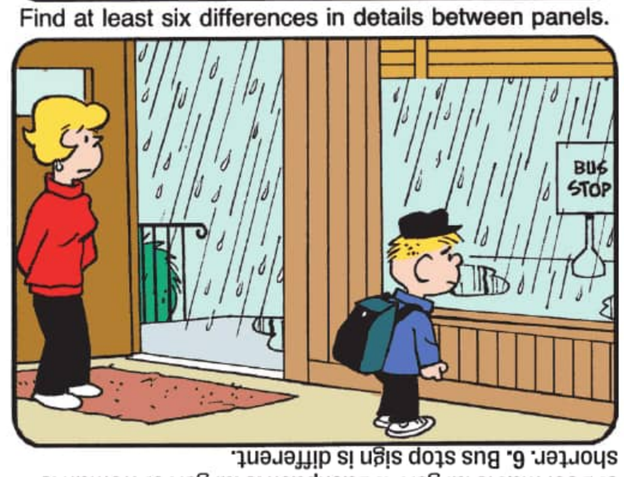
2 3 3 4

Hard = 32

2 4 6 8

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



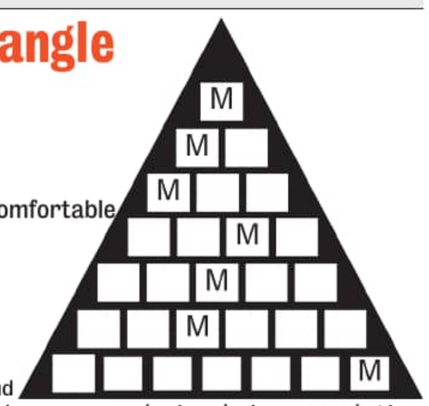
Differences: 1. Puddle is smaller. 2. Railing is different. 3. Doormat is larger. 4. Backpack is larger. 5. Woman is shorter. 6. Bus stop sign is different.

Riddler

In a dark chamber I have been erected When you first see me, I'll have been dissected Upon reaching me, you'll see I have been bagged A quick inspection will reveal I've been tagged Once home, you may subject my members to heat By choosing otherwise, I'm still fit to eat Dress my separate parts as may be fitting Completely consumed in more than one sitting What am I?

Alpha triangle

1 Meter, abbr.
2 Med Off
3 A stooge
4 The Eternal City
5 Iliad's poet
6 More cosu and comfortable
7 Bravery

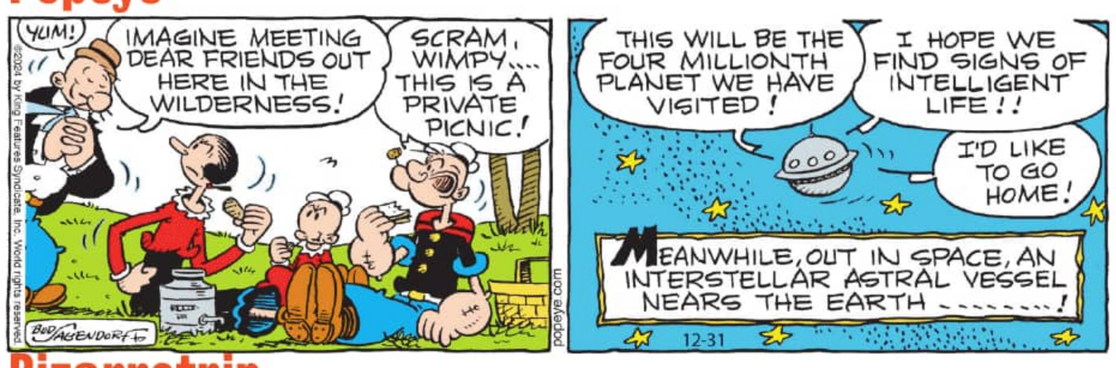


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE »

COMICS

Popeye


YUM!
IMAGINE MEETING DEAR FRIENDS OUT HERE IN THE WILDERNESS!
SCRAM, WIMPY.... THIS IS A PRIVATE PICNIC!
THIS WILL BE THE FOUR MILLIONTH PLANET WE HAVE VISITED!
I HOPE WE FIND SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE!!
I'D LIKE TO GO HOME!
MEANWHILE, OUT IN SPACE, AN INTERSTELLAR ASTRAL VESSEL NEARS THE EARTH.....!
12-31
popeye.com
BOB ALGERDORF

Bizarrotrip

Wayno & Piraro 6-21-25
"Specimen"? No, I said you are a fascinating spaceman.
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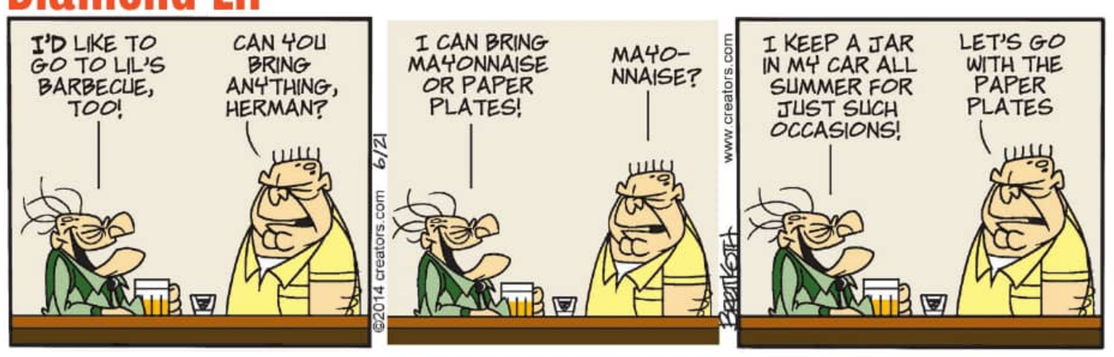
Diamond Lil


I'D LIKE TO GO TO LIL'S BARBECUE, TOO!
CAN YOU BRING ANYTHING, HERMAN?
I CAN BRING MAYONNAISE OR PAPER PLATES!
MAYO-NNAISE?
I KEEP A JAR IN MY CAR ALL SUMMER FOR JUST SUCH OCCASIONS!
LET'S GO WITH THE PAPER PLATES
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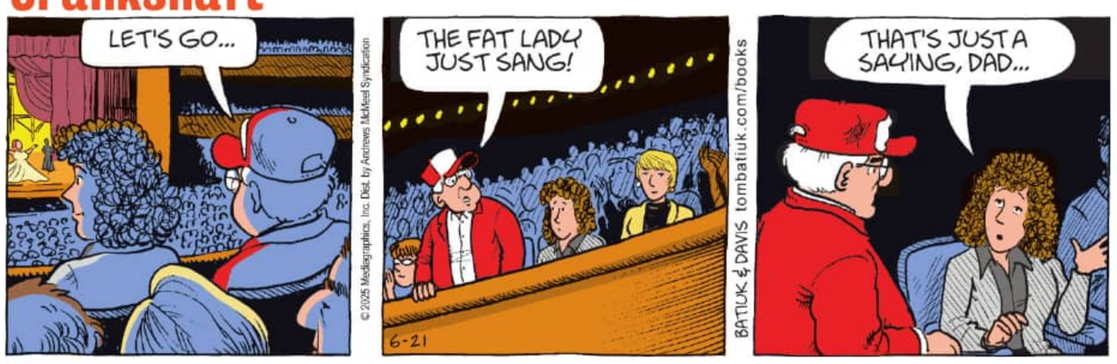
6/21
www.creators.com

Hart of the city

SHARI, YOU GOTTA COME WITH US TO FALLS BRIDGE TONIGHT. JENNY INVITED US. SHE'S THE GIRL I MET IN THE CEMETERY.
YOU DO ALL SORTS OF CREEPY THINGS THESE DAYS, HUH? I'M IN.
J
JENNY
MY FRIENDS AND I ARE GOING TO DO A NIGHT WALK ACROSS FALLS BRIDGE AT 9. SEE YOU THERE?
WE'LL BE THERE.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2025 ANDREWS MCMEEL
GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY
6/21

Crankshaft


LET'S GO...
THE FAT LADY JUST SANG!
THAT'S JUST A SAYING, DAD...
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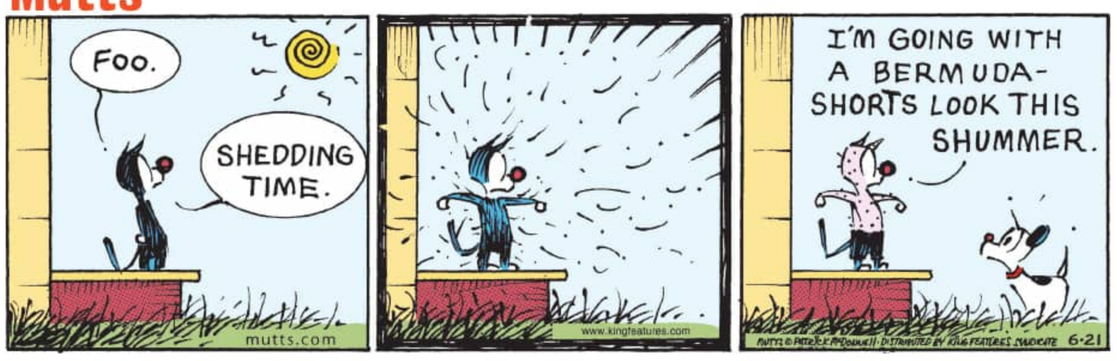
6-21
BATIUK & DAVIS tombatiuk.com/books

Mutts



WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

This year offers prosperity and joy. Finances flourish through thoughtful management. Career advancements reward consistent efforts and innovative thinking. Love strengthens with nurturing care and understanding. Luck favors new ventures. Tip: Stay curious, exploring new perspectives and experiences will lead to personal growth and open unexpected pathways toward long-term fulfillment and success.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

Your energy inspires action, take bold steps toward your goals today. Trust your instincts and embrace opportunities that push you closer to fulfilling both your personal and professional aspirations with confidence.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

Find serenity in simplicity, slow down and enjoy life's small joys. These grounding practices calm your mind, strengthen emotional balance, and prepare you for challenges ahead with renewed focus.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

Your communication skills shine, express yourself with confidence. Networking or collaborating opens doors to exciting opportunities, helping you share your vision and expand your personal and professional horizons meaningfully.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Nurture relationships with heartfelt conversations. Sharing openly builds deeper connections and creates harmony, leaving you feeling supported and valued by those who care about your emotional well-being.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Recognition empowers you, own your accomplishments with pride. Use this momentum to set ambitious goals, knowing your natural charisma and dedication will attract opportunities aligned with your passions and vision.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

Reorganize and declutter, clearing physical and mental space reduces stress and enhances productivity. This refreshed approach helps you focus on tasks that matter most, bringing clarity and calm to your day.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

Kindness creates harmony, offer encouragement to someone who needs it. These thoughtful gestures strengthen relationships, building emotional connections that bring joy to both you and those around you.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

Transformation is unfolding, embrace new perspectives and release what no longer serves you. These changes create room for powerful growth, aligning your journey with your deepest aspirations and purpose.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

Adventure fuels your spirit, explore new opportunities or environments that excite you. These experiences broaden your perspective and inspire creativity, helping you grow personally and professionally with renewed enthusiasm.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

Dedication ensures progress, keep working steadily toward your long-term goals. Each step you take now strengthens your foundation for meaningful success and enduring accomplishments in the future.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

Collaborative energy thrives, join forces with people who share your vision. Together, you'll transform innovative ideas into tangible results, creating impactful progress in your shared endeavors.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Quiet reflection heals, spend time journaling or meditating to process emotions. This stillness provides clarity, helping you approach upcoming decisions with confidence and emotional balance.

www.sundeepkochar.com

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Jatin Singh, Bengaluru

Jatin, Bengaluru

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

5 × 6^(1/3) × 9^(1/3) × 2^(-1/3) =
5 × (3×2)^(1/3) × 3^(2/3) × 2^(-1/3) =
5 × 3^(1/3+2/3) × 2^(1/3) × 2^(-1/3) =
5 × 3^1 × 2^0 =
5 × 3 × 1 = 15

RIDDLER A loaf of bread

QUOTE UNCODE

The most authentic thing about us is our capacity to create, to overcome, to endure, to transform, to love and to be greater than our suffering.

FAST FIVE

C	H	E	R	T
R	O	D	E	O
U	N	D	E	R
M	E	A	L	S
B	Y	S	S	I

STRIKE OUT

R	I	L	L	D	I	A
F	A	D	I	N	G	
E		A		O		L
R	D		O	M	A	H
I	B	E	R	I	A	
G		R	A	N		A
E		S	K	I	N	N
T		M	E	L		I
A	C	I	D	I	C	
T		N		N	A	D
I	C	E	A	G		E
O		R		C	A	
N	O	S	E		A	I

O	R	A	L			
	E		L			
G	E	N	T	L	E	
	T		T			B
C	A	N	A	P	E	
	C		W	I	N	H
	I			E	D	
	A	N		L	E	N
A	B	L	A	Z	E	
O	S	A		H	E	R
	T		T			N

QUICK

R	A	Y	S		P	O	L	L	Y	W	O	G		
A			R		S		I			A		N		
C	R	E	S	S	I	D	A		X	L	I			
S			N		L		V			N		G		
O	W	N	E	D		P	A	D	D	I	N	G		
			U		E		I					A		
P	A	N	D	H	I		R	U	S	S	E	T		
			C				L		E					
K	I	R	M	A	N	I		F	E	L	O	N		
C		I		U		L		B		E				
I	C	A	N		J	E	A	L	O	U	S	Y		
T		L		R		T		O		O				
S	O	F	T	W	A	R	E		P	R	O	D		

STRIKE OUT

R	I	L	L	D	I	A
F	A	D	I	N	G	
E		A		O		L
R	D		O	M	A	H
I	B	E	R	I	A	
G		R	A	N		A
E		S	K	I	N	N
T		M	E	L		I
A	C	I	D	I	C	
T		N		N	A	D
I	C	E	A	G		E
O		R		C	A	
N	O	S	E		A	I

O	R	A	L			
	E		L			
G	E	N	T	L	E	
	T		T			B
C	A	N	A	P	E	
	C		W	I	N	H
	I			E	D	
	A	N		L	E	N
A	B	L	A	Z	E	
O	S	A		H	E	R
	T		T			N

MENSA PUZZLE

K. Working through the diagram in columns, from top to bottom, letters alphabet in steps of 5 for the left hand column, 7 for the next one, then 9, then 11.

BULL'S EYE okra, work WAXWORK,

SUDOKU

8	7	6	5	4	2	1	3	9
5	4	9	1	8	3	2	6	7
2	1	3	6	7	9	4	8	5
1	8	4	2	9	7	3	5	6
6	5	7	3	1	8	9	2	4
3	9	2	4	6	5	7	1	8
4	6	8	7	3	1	5	9	2
9	2	1	8	5	4	6	7	3
7	3	5	9	2	6	8	4	1

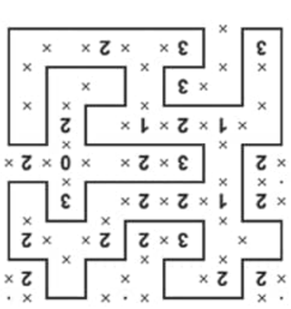
ALPHA TRIANGLE

M, MO, Moe, Rome, Homer, Homler, Heroism.

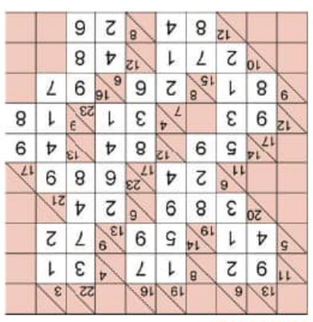
GO FIGURE

Easy
4 - 5 + 4 + 1 = 4
Medium
3 x 2 + 4 x 3 = 30
Hard
6 - 4 x 8 x 2 = 32

LOOP



KAKURO



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Hubli: *7204818810, 8123047553*

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Uttara Kannada: *9686687581*

Karuna Toyota
Gulbarga: *7829990004*
Raichur: *7829992909*

Shakti Toyota
Chikkamagaluru, Channarayapatna, Hassan, Kadur: *9980532064,*
Shivamogga, Sagara: *9686652728*

BJS Toyota
Hospet: *7829927943,* ***Bellary;*** *7829927957,*
Koppal: *7829927968,* ***Chitradurga:***
7829927933, ***Gangavathi:*** *7829927943*